

The Eternal Joys of God's Presence.

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd at the

TEMPLE-CHURCH

John UPON *Joane*

All-Saint's Day.

Printed at the Request of the *Treasurers* and
Benchers of those Two Honourable Societies.

By HENRY FELTON, L. L. D. Rector of *Melford* in
Suffolk, and Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty.

L O N D O N :

Printed for *Tim. Goodwin* at the *Queen's-Head* against
St. *Dunstan's* Church in *Fleetstreet*, 1699.

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PSALM XVI. II.

*---In thy presence is fulness of joy; at
thy right hand are pleasures for ever-
more.*

THE Desire of Joy and Pleasure is that which exciteth and inspiriteth all the Actions and Endeavours of Men: All our Contrivings, all our Undertakings spring out of, and center in this one Desire of attaining that wherein we may find Joy and Contentment. Not only all Vices, but all Virtues too, are fed and supported by Pleasure; though the Pleasures of the one and the other are infinitely different. 'Tis not Riches, but a certain Pleasure which a low earthly Mind taketh in an Object so conformable to it, that feedeth Covetousness: 'Tis not Honour that properly feedeth Ambition, but a bewitching Pleasure an Airy Mind taketh in soaring aloft. As for Sensuality, and all the several Ways of it; what are they else but a profess'd Service, or rather Vassalage of Pleasure?

sure ? Briefly , Every particular Vice hath some particular sinful Pleasure that begetteth it.

And as Vice deriveth its Being and Maintenance from Pleasure, so doth Virtue too. In the way of Piety and Religion , what is it else that strengthneth and cheereth up Devotion to work through the Difficulties of it, but an internal Pleasure, tasted here in the sweetness of a good Conscience, and in the transporting Hope of the full Joys and eternal Pleasures hereafter ? Since then the whole World saileth by the Compass of Delight, shaping their Courses for Joy and Pleasure ; and the greatest part, for want of a clear believing Apprehension of those full Joys unto which Man was made, fasten, and rest themselves upon the poor, empty, momentary and unsatisfactory Delights which are here to be enjoyed ; Is it not a matter worthy of our best Labour, to call my own and your Thoughts as it were into the *Mount*, to contemplate, and consider unto what exquisite Joys, and high Delights, Man is created ? That we may the better know how to set our Affections upon Things above, and not upon Things on the Earth ; These are momentary, those eternal ; These are unsatisfactory, those
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are Fulness of Joy. *In thy presence, says the Royal Prophet, is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.*

From which Words, these Two Propositions may naturally and easily be deduced.

I. That there are full satisfying Joys and everlasting Pleasures attainable by Men.

II. That these Joys and Pleasures are in the Presence, or at the Right hand of God.

Which Two Points I shall first endeavour to explain and prove; and then, in the Third place, I will describe to you the Nature and Excellency of those full Joys, so far as God hath been pleased in his Holy Scriptures to reveal them to us.

I. That there are full satisfying Joys and eternal Pleasures attainable by Men. This is one of the main Principles of all Religion. We see that the first Article of our Christian Faith, is to believe that there is a God who made all things; and the last, to believe, that there is an everlasting, or compleat eternal Happiness

ness to be attain'd of Man. Which Two Points are the *Alpha* and *Omega* of all Religious Faith, and true Religion; and without a firm settling of these Two in the Heart, it is impossible that any Spark of Devotion, or the least Mite of Godliness should be kept alive: If either of these fail, all is lost. The Holy Scriptures therefore, are so plain and full in the declaration of this Truth, That God hath prepared full and eternal Joys in his Presence for the Righteous, that we need not cite any particular passage for the proof of it; for the whole Body both of the Law and Gospel, stand upon this bottom. The Sum of the Law lies in this Covenant, *Do this, and thou shalt live; i. e. Thou shalt live Eternally*: And the Sum of the Gospel in this; *Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved*. The Eternal Life and Salvation of Man is therefore not only a Principle taught in the Law and the Gospel, but also a *Precognitum*, or thing necessarily pre-supposed by them both.

Though the Arguments from the Sacred Scriptures be very plain and full in this matter; yet seeing there are many who break the Bonds of God asunder, and cast away the Cords of Christ from them; I mean, slip themselves out
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of the Ties of Holy Scripture by an unaccountable sort of Deism, or Atheism ; It will be necessary (for their better satisfaction) to evince and illustrate the Truth of it in their own way ; which I shall endeavour to do by Two Arguments drawn from the Dictates of Reason ; which if they be not demonstrative, yet carry with them such a strength of Probability, as may make the most Rational Man doubt or fear, that he doth not only offend against Christian Faith, but even against Right Reason, in seeking wholly the vain and empty Pleasures of this World , without having any regard to those full and perfect Joys which are at God's Right hand.

The first Argument from Reason to prove that there is a Condition of full Joys and eternal Pleasures attainable by us Men, may be taken from the natural Desire and Appetite which is in all Men.

All Men that have the actual Use of their Reason, have an earnest Desire of such an Estate of Happiness as may fully satisfy them, and endure eternally. This Desire is natural to Man ; for else how should it be in all Men ? It is a Desire likewise agreeable to Right Reason,

son, for it tends to the Perfection of the Creature, and the Glory of the Maker to make it so.

Now is it probable that God should frame the Hearts of all Men so desirous of a thing, that no Man can or shall ever attain unto? We see, that if Man begets a Child, if possible he be able, he will provide to fill the Belly of it: If we that are Evil are so careful to provide for that which we beget; were it not then a strange thing in God (be it spoken with all humble Reverence of the Divine Majesty) that he should create and infuse such a desire of eternal Happiness (as certainly this Appetite in all Men is of God's begetting) and not provide wherewith to satisfy this Desire?

Besides, we may observe, that the Great and Wise Creator of all things, hath utterly abhorred Vacuity and Emptiness in all his Works. The vast Channel, the Abyss of the Sea, is a fathomless Gulph for Depth, and an immeasurable Extent for Circumference, yet God hath provided Waters enough to fill it; The Space between Heaven and Earth is infinitely large and wide, yet God hath provided wherewithal to fill it; The craving Appetites and Stomachs of all Men, all Beasts, Fowls, Fishes,
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Things creeping, &c. require an infinite quantity of Nourishables for their Food, yet God hath provided wherewith they all may be filled: The Desire and Appetite (if I may so call it) of the Angels must needs aim at high and transcendent Matters; such poor Trifles, as make up our Delights here, fashionable Dresses, Recreations, bodily Pleasures, &c. are nothing unto them; yet God hath provided somewhat to satisfy and fill them; for otherwise those heavenly Spirits cou'd not be Blessed. In like manner, though the Desire of Man towards a compleat and eternal Happiness seems to be very high and vast, yet he that filleth the vast Sea; he that filleth the endless Gulphs of Hunger both in Man and Beast; he that filleth the capacious Comprehensions of the Angels, it is easy for him to satisfy and fill this Appetite of Man.

And it is somewhat absurd, according to the Dictates of Right Reason, to think that of all his Creatures, God hath created only the Reasonable Soul of Man for a perpetual Emptiness, and hath ordained no Object to fill and satisfy it; as 'tis plain he hath not in this World: And therefore we have good Reason to believe, that he hath prepared for it full satisfying Joys and

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eternal Pleasures in another; the transporting Expectation of which, is the only true satisfying Pleasure it can enjoy in this Life. That the Pleasure of Riches, Honour, or bodily Pleasures, bear no proportion to it, every Man's own Experience may convince him. No! they are so flitting and uncertain, so empty and unsatisfactory, so mixed and alloyed, that the most improv'd Enjoyments of them are rather *Vanity and vexation of spirit*, as the *Wiseman* speaks, than any true, solid, or satisfying Delights. But,

2. The Second Reason which we shall use to prove the propounded Truth, is this: If there be no Fulness of Joys and Eternal Pleasures in the Presence of God, which Man should seek as his End, and may attain as his perfect Happiness; then the Reasonable Soul of Man seems to be no better than a Servant or Slave to his Sensual Part; and those Advantages and Excellencies which we have above the Beasts, are but as Drudges for that part which we have in common with them. For if the Soul of Man hath not the Eternal Delight and Contentment of a Supernatural Life with God for her utmost End; then of necessity she must stoop down to this as her
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main End, and seek the best Delights this World afford, without Thought or Regard of any other.

And what then serveth our Reason for, but that we may with a little more neatness, curiousness, and stateliness, do the very same things which the Beasts do? *i. e.* Eat, drink, sleep, play, beget our like, please our Senses, and the like: Yea (which is worse) what doth our Reason serve us for, but to furnish us with such means and devices, whereby we may become more brutish than the Beasts themselves? And this we see plainly by Experience in such Persons, who have cast off the Belief and Care of Heavenly Happiness. What doth their height and strength of Wit and Parts serve them for, but as a help to wade farther and deeper into the Mud of Sensuality, than the Beasts can do?

And indeed, if there be no Supernatural Life for Man, who can blame them for so doing, or seeking the best Delight and Contentment of this Natural? But is it possible that the Reason of Man should digest such a Baseness as this, that she is for nothing else, but for a Slave and Vassal for the Sensitive Part? Nothing (methinks) is more incongruous to Reason, than to think, that the *Divinae auræ parti-*

cula, the Soul, shou'd be given us only to serve such mean Purposes as these. Are the Rich and Noble Endowments of it, capable of no better employ, than to cater exquisitely for the Body? They who can entertain such unbecoming Thoughts of the Excellencies of their own Nature, show that their own Follies have brought a greater degeneracy upon them, than the Curse inflicted upon *Adam's* Fall. We may reasonably conclude then, That those Excellencies which Man hath above other Creatures, were not given him to be the Vassals of Sensuality; but as Advantages, as Aids to raise him to the Blessedness of a Supernatural Life with God.

But it may be said, That the Reasonable Soul of a Man hath in this Life an high Flight, and an excellent Delight in the Raptures and Sweetness of Contemplation; and besides, in many Men doth manage Great and Noble Works about Governing and Ruling; and therefore though it should have no Supernatural Happiness Eternal in another Life, yet it cannot be said to be wholly a Servant and Drudge for the Sensual Part.

But to this it may be answer'd, *First*, That the Speculations and Contemplations of the Reason-

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Reasonable Soul are all Essays, and, as it were, Flutterings towards her last Perfection, which end in the Contemplation of God. And if we set aside, or deny her such an End, then all her Acts, which are meerly Speculative, and not profitable for this Life, are no better than unprofitable Ramblings, and wild Vagaries, doing more hurt to the Life of Man, by wasting it in the pursuit of Shadows and Fancies, than they can any ways do good; and are more foolish and vain, than any other Works wherein she is employ'd for the Service of this Life, and may in truth be counted as part of her Weakness and Vanity, rather than her Felicity. Though indeed, if we think of them (as we ought) that they are as steps of Progress to a higher Contemplation of God, then they are otherwise.

2dly. As to the Works which the Reason of Man doth in well-governing and settling such great Bodies of Society, as Empires and Kingdoms, they are indeed great, admirable, and noble: If they be consider'd as referring to a Twofold End; the One, that Men may lead a godly and an honest Life; the Other, a quiet and peaceable One. Both which Ends are briefly express'd by St. Paul, 1 Tim. 2. 2. and are such

as all Governments take upon them. Now so far as' the Work of Governing tendeth to uphold Religion, as a way for Men to raise themselves to an Eternal Happiness, so far the Reason of Man therein is a Servant to a divine and heavenly End: But if we set aside this noble and glorious End, and propound no other, but that Societies of Men may live quietly and peaceably, orderly and safely together in this World; then all the Contrivances of Government, and the Acts of the Rational Soul about it, are but Services to the Sensitive Part of Man.

For what then are they else, but agreed and settled Provisions, that every Man may Eat and Drink in quiet, Sleep, Walk, Ride, Play, Enjoy his Pleasures without any unjust disturbance of the Idle and Malicious. In conclusion therefore, this seems necessary to be granted, That either the Reasonable Soul of Man serves to raise him to some happier End than we see in this Life; or else all her noblest Acts and ingenious Devices, are but Services for the Contentment of the Sensitive Part, or (which is worse, and must be affirm'd of Acts meerly Speculative) are vain, frivolous, and to no purpose.

Thus

Thus Reason and Scripture unitely conspire to assure us of the Certainty of this most desirable Truth, That there are Joys, full-satisfying Joys, and eternal Pleasures attainable by Men. Which was the First Proposition I proposed to speak to.

The Second is, That these Joys and Pleasures are in the Presence of God, or at his Right hand. Before I enter upon the Proof of this, it will be necessary to explain what is meant here by *the Presence of God*, and his *Right hand*. The Presence of the Face of God (as the Original signifieth) hath divers Significations in Scripture, but they may all be reduced to these Four :

1. It signifieth the visible Sacred Assemblies of the Church of God on Earth ; in which, because God is present after an especial manner, they are therefore call'd *his Presence*. As the King, who is Lord and Owner of the whole Court, yet hath one Room especially for his Chamber of Presence ; so God, who is Lord of the whole World, hath his Church, and specially the visible Assemblies of it, for his Chamber of Presence. So the Word is taken, *Psal. 42. 2. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living*

ving God: *when shall I come and appear before God; or, in the presence of God?* The Original hath the same word that is used in my Text, which we translate *before the Face of God, or, in the Presence of God, i. e. in his Holy Temple.*

2. It signifies the Almighty Power, or the All-viewing Sight of God, *Psalm. 139. 7. Whither shall I fly from thy presence? i. e. From thy Power, and from thy Sight.*

3. The Special Favour and Grace where-with God loveth his Elect. So *Psalm. 51. 11. Cast me not away from thy presence; i. e. Cast me not out of thy Favour and Love.*

4. It signifieth that Communication of himself face to face in Glory, whereby God for ever maketh Blessed the Holy Angels and Saints in Heaven; which is call'd by Divines, *the Beatifical Vision*; and by St. Jude, *the Presence of Glory*. Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory, &c. St. Jude, v. 24. And in this sense we must understand the Presence of God in my Text. The Perfection of our Heavenly Happiness is well express'd by St. Paul, and expounds this of David's. David's Phrase is, *In thy presence is fulness of joy*. St. Paul's thus: *But now we see through a glass darkly, but then face*
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to face, 1 Cor. 13. 12. i. e. When we shall see God, not as now through a Glass darkly, but our Face, as it were, to his Face, our Presence in his Presence. 'Tis of this the Royal Prophet here speaks, *In thy presence is fulness of joy*. So much for the Exposition of the first word, *Presence*.

The Right hand of God, is another Metaphor, whereby the same thing is express'd to us. This word also is used in Scripture to signify many things, but usufally these Three :
1. The great and mighty Power of God. So *Psal. 89. 13. Strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand; i. e. Great and Wonderful is thy Power.*

2. The Sovereign Dignity and Prerogative of Honour, Glory and Power, unto which God hath advanced the Human Nature of Christ above the Angels, and every Creature. So *Eph. 1. 20. And set him at his own right hand in heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, &c.*

3. The happy Estate and Condition in which God shall settle his Elect Children at the last day. So *Matt. 25. 33. where it is said, That God shall separate the godly from the wicked, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, and the goats on the left: i. e. He shall settle the one in an Estate of Everlasting*

Joys and Happiness, but send the other into a Condition of unspeakable Grief and Misery. And in this sense we must take the *Right hand of God* in this place. So then, the Scripture it self doth sufficiently explain what we may here understand by *God's presence*, and *his Right hand*: i. e. The immediate Society of God in a Beattifical Vision of his Glorious Excellency, and the Happiness thereby arising to such Beholders of God.

Having thus explain'd these Two Terms, I will proceed to the Proof; That the full Joys and eternal Pleasures of Man consist in the Presence, or blessed Fruition of God. As this is the Doctrine of *David* in this place and elsewhere; so is it likewise of *St. John*, as appears by the Description he gives of the Blessedness of the Citizens of the Heavenly *Jerusalem*, Rev. 22. 4. *They shall see the face of God*, says he: and v. 5. *The Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign for ever and ever*. And to this purpose are those words of the *Psalmist*, Psal. 36. 8, 9. *They shall be abundantly fill'd with the fatness of thy house, and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures: For with thee is the fountain of life, and in thy light shall we see light*. Thus
St. John.

St. *John* likewise in the fore-mention'd Description of the Heavenly *Jerusalem*, useth the same Metaphor: *He shewed me a pure river of waters of life, clear as chrystal, proceeding out of the Throne of God and the Lamb*, Rev. 22. 1. Which metaphorical Expressions do admirably and elegantly set forth both the Fulness and Purity, as well as the Perpetuity and Eternity of those Pleasures which arise unto us from the Vision of God. The Pleasures of a Man which the Creatures afford him, are like Plashes and Puddles, mixed, shallow, and of short Duration; but the Divine Joys issuing from the Fruition of God, are like a great River, clear and unmix'd, deep and profound, without overflowing, full and perpetual.

As the Scriptures are express in this matter, so Natural Reason dictates the same thing. For if there be no uniting or concentrating of all Good, any other way, but only in God; for he that hath God in possession, hath in him all Good, which can be desired: As he being intirely and infinitely perfect, can want nothing to make himself more happy; so he that enjoys him can want no manner of thing that is Good; and therefore his Heart must needs be filled, because it hath no farther progress of Desire:

But there is no other Good, or uniting together of Good, but only in God, in which there is not some Want; and therefore cannot yield a Fulness of Joy and Contentment. As for instance; Health is a great Blessing, but yet in Health there may be a want of Riches: Riches are a comfortable Blessing, but yet in them there may be a want of Wisdom; in Wisdom a want of Honour, in Honour a want of Strength; in Strength a want of Beauty; in Beauty a want of Virtue; in Virtue a want of Perfection. But suppose all these, or more than all these, were united in one Person, yet there is one thing wanting that makes them imperfect and unsatisfying; and that is, the want of Perpetuity and Eternity. Now all Good things meet in God. And so firm and immutable is all Good in him, that it cannot be sever'd from him; so Eternal, that even Eternity it self can never waste, or wear out. When Man's Heart, therefore, shall be enlarg'd to comprehend God, and enjoy him, then shall he have all Good whatsoever, and a perfect Happiness made sure to him for all Eternity. Our Reason then must conclude thus much, That either Man hath no Fulness of Pleasure, or of necessity this must be it, To enjoy the Beatifical Vision or Presence of God.

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Besides, we may observe in Nature, that the Rest of all things is no where else, but in their proper place ; when they have attained to the Center of their Motion, they rest and move no farther, as if they were fully satisfied. Now as gross and massy Bodies, whose proper Motion is to descend, have their Center below, *i. e.* the Earth : So pure and immaterial Spirits (such as the Soul of Man is) whose proper Motion is to ascend, have their Center above, which is God. Beyond this Center they cannot move ; in this they rest. When therefore the Souls and Spirits of Men shall have attained unto God, and shall adhere and cleave unto him ; then, and not elsewhere, shall they have perfect Rest, and full Contentment. To this purpose is the Common, but Excellent Saying of St. *Austin*, *Fecisti nos ad Te (Domine) & inquietum est cor nostrum donec requiescat in Te ; Thou hast made us (O Lord) for thy self, and therefore our heart is never lodged at rest until it come to Thee, and rest in Thee.*

Since, therefore, Reason and Revelation, Philosophy and Scripture do so well agree, in establishing this great Fundamental Article of our Faith, I need not trouble you or my self with any farther Proofs of it ; but shall briefly enquire,

quire, what these Full Joys are, and wherein they do consist.

In doing this, I shall not pretend to give you an exact Idea or Description of them; that's a Task and Province fit only for an *Angel*, or a *glorified Spirit*: All I aim at, is to give you such an account of them, as God hath thought fit to impart to us Mortals in the Scripture; which though it falls short of the Things themselves, yet is doubtless the best and the utmost that our narrow Capacities can bear; but such as may enflame our highest Endeavours after the Enjoyment of them, and such as will satisfy our most extravagant Desires.

The Scripture leadeth us Two ways to some kind of Comprehension of our Future State of Happiness: | *Per fiam Negationis, & per viam Eminentiae*, as the Schoolmen speak; *By the way of Negation, and by the way of Eminence*. By the way of Negation, *i. e.* | by denying all such things to be in our Future State of Happiness, which we find any ways troublesome or burthensome to us. Thus they speak plainly, That there shall be no Hunger or Thirst, *Rev. 7. 16.* That there shall be no more Sorrow nor Tears: *God shall wipe away all tears, v. 17.* That there shall be no more Corruption, no Mortality:
For

For this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality, 1 Cor. 15. That there shall be no Power of a second Death, Rev. 20. 6. No Death, no Crying, no Sorrowing, no Pain shall accompany us in our Future State of Happiness. Here, like little Ants, we crawl and creep up and down this *Mole-hill* of Earth, each of us with our Burthen on our Shoulders; but there all our Burthens shall be taken off. Here Hunger, and Thirst, and Provision for these, is one man's Burthen: Here Sickness and Craziness, Gout or Stone, is another man's Burthen; but there all these things shall be done away: Here unruly Lust is another man's Burthen, but there the Fuel and Life of it shall fail: Here Sin and Death are the common Burthens of all Mankind, but at God's Right hand there shall neither be Sin, nor Death, nor Fear of either. In a word; whatsoever here doth pain, perplex, hinder, or any way discontent or vex us, shall in the State of Full Joys be removed far from us. This is one way by which the Scripture teacheth us to know something of our Future Happiness.

The other is (by way of *Eminence*, i. e.) by comparing our Blessed State to the most eminent and glorious Things, which by Sight or Experience.

perience we have ever known. Thus to excite our Desires and Longings after it, the Scripture sets it out to us, by such glorious Metaphors as these. Sometimes the Metaphor of *shining like the Sun* is made use of. *Then shall the righteous shine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father*, Matt. 13. Sometimes the Metaphor of a Kingdom: *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you*, Matt. 25. Sometimes that of a Crown; *You shall receive a crown of glory*, 1 Pet. 5. Of sitting upon a Throne; *Ye also shall sit upon twelve Thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of Israel*, Matt. 19. Of a Marriage-Feast: *Blessed are they that are call'd to the Marriage-supper of the Lamb*, Rev. 19. These are glorious Similitudes indeed, and as expressive of the thing as our weak Natures are capable of. For the greatest visible Brightness in Heaven, is the shine of the Sun; the greatest Lustre on Earth, is the Honour of a Kingdom; the Royalest Ornament of a King, is his Crown; the most Majestical Seat of a Crowned Head, is his Throne; the most exquisite Rejoycings, are commonly at King's Marriage-Feasts. Thus Heaven and our Future Joys are represented to us by such things as are in greatest Esteem, and thought most desirable by us; That our weak
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Understandings might raise themselves from
 thence to some high Thoughts of our future
 Perfection. But after all, we must own they
 are but poor and faint Resemblances of those
 Full Joys and Eternal Pleasures which are at
 God's Right hand: Whereas then, the great-
 est Brightness of Heaven, and the highest
 Lustre of Glory, Honour, Majesty, Mirth and
 Joy that is on Earth, stand but as Shadows in
 Scripture, to set forth the Eternal Pleasures of
 Heaven; how shou'd we poor Mortals be able
 to conceive them rightly, or express them fully?
 St. *Austin* in one of his Epistles tells us,
 " That on the very day St. *Jerom* died, he
 " being in his Study with Pen, Ink, and Pa-
 " per, about to write to him concerning the
 " Joys of Heaven, suddenly he saw a Light
 " breaking into his Study, and this Voice he
 " thought he heard: O *Austin*! *what dost thou?*
 " *dost thou think to put the vast Sea into a small*
 " *Vessel? When the Heavens shall cease from their*
 " *continued Motion, then shalt thou be able to un-*
 " *derstand what the Joys of Heaven are, and not*
 " *before, unless thou comest to feel them as now I do.*
 No; there is but one way of understanding
 them perfectly, and that is by attaining them.
 This the Blessed Saints and Martyrs, whom

we this Day commemorate | have long since experienced. And this way, I humbly beseech God, to bring both you and me with them (one day) to a full and perfect understanding of them.

And that he may the better do this, give me leave to Apply what has been said in few words, and so conclude.

If then God has provided for us Full Joys and Eternal Pleasures in another Life, which exceeds both our Power to express, and our Hearts to conceive; is it not our bounden Duty to render Him all the Honour and Praise due unto his Name? *For they that know his Name, will put their trust in him.* Let this first of all excite our Hearts to praise and magnify God for his infinite Goodness and Love to Mankind, that he hath ordained so happy an End, and such transporting Joys for us poor Mortals, as the Eternal Fruition of Himself. Lord! what is Man that thou shou'd exalt him above the other Works of thy hands, and so far too as to make Thy self the Inheritance of his Rest, and the Substance of his Triumphant Joy! Is there any greater Happiness that thou couldst have given him, than that thou shouldest give him thy self for his Happiness?

piness ? Is there any surer than that which is founded upon thy Immutability and Eternity ? What couldest thou have done more for thy Creatures ? How then can we do less than exalt and magnify thy infinite Goodness, Mercy and Bounty to us for ever ? As thy Love is inexpressibly Glorious in giving thy Son for our Saviour, so is it also in making thy self our Salvation and Felicity.

2. Let us settle our Thoughts and Endeavours upon this as our main End, to seek seriously these Full Joys and Eternal Pleasures of Heaven. We would all willingly (I make no question) have such Contentment and Full Joys as may last for ever : But are we in good earnest ? Let us seek them where they may be found. You have heard already, and your own Experience sufficiently witness the Truth of it. The Joys and Pleasures of this World do all come far short of this Contentment ; Where then must we seek them but in the Bosom of the Father, where only true, Transporting and Everlasting Joys are to be found ? 'Tis true indeed, God has been pleased to put a Touch of Delight and Pleasure into these inferior Things, the better to quicken the Spi-

rits of Men for the necessary Actions of this Life. And Christian Piety allows us the use of them, if we would but keep her Rules and Measures in the Enjoyment of them. And thus (if God sees it so fit) I cou'd wish you your Parts in both. But yet I humbly and earnestly intreat you, Do not lose the one for the other; the Eternal for the Momentary, the Satisfactory for the Unsatisfactory. As a Merchant who Loads himself here, and sets out for the *East-Indies*, sets down before-hand what Ports and Havens (God blessing him) he will make for; yet, by the way, he may perhaps touch in upon this or that Coast for fresh Water, or other Refreshments, and barter away there some small Trifles. So I would persuade you to do; Let this be your best-resolved Conclusion, That Heaven, and the Full Joys thereof, shall be the Port and Haven which you will make for: As for Earthly Delights and Pleasures, you may touch in upon them by the way, as for fresh Water, or other Refreshment, but barter away only some small Trifles for them; Let not your best Loading, your precious Souls, go in Exchange for them. Thus may you taste the Delights of this World here, and be fill'd with the Full Joys of Heaven hereafter.

3. And Lastly ; Let us be careful to walk in the Way which may bring us to these Full Joys and Eternal Pleasures of Heaven ; and what that Way is, St. Paul tells us : *It is to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts , and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World, looking for the blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ,* Tit. 2. This is what I principally aimed at this day, by setting before you the Joys of Heaven as powerful Motives to stir you up unto a Holy, Religious Life on Earth, as the necessary Condition of enjoying them in Heaven. | Others may have set before you the Terrors of the Lord, *Death and Hell*, to persuade you to the same thing ; but I have set before you *Life and Heaven*, chuse whether you will : But I know your Choice ; you had rather have Life than Death ; rather enjoy a Fellowship with God and his Holy Angels in the Pleasures of Heaven, than a Partnership with the Devil and his Angels in the Torments of Hell. But chuse this, I beseech you, not like Fools, who chuse the End, neglecting the necessary Means ; but, like Rational Creatures,

tures, chuse the Means, together with the End, and for the End-sake. As you desire the Eternal Joys of Heaven, so enter into the Right way which may bring you surely to it; and that is, to fear the Lord. *The fear of the Lord tendeth to life; and he that hath it, shall abide satisfied with it,* Prov. 14. 23. He that tells us, *In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore;* Tells us likewise, *The upright shall dwell in thy presence,* Psal. 140. 13. 'Tis the Upright and Godly shall dwell in the Presence of God's Favour here, and in the Presence of his Glory hereafter. Let us therefore walk Uprightly both with God and Man, that we may in some measure feel the Presence of God here in Divine Comforts and Consolations, as Tasts and Assurances of the Full Joys of Heaven that await us. When our Blessed Lord shall come with this *Euge, Well done thou true and faithful servant, receive the Kingdom prepared for you.* That this may be the happy Condition of all here; Let us humbly beseech God to give us Grace so to follow thy Blessed Saints in all Virtuous and Godly Living, that we may come to those Unspeakable Joys which
thou

thou hast prepared for them that love Thee,
through Jesus Christ our Lord : To whom
with the Father and Holy Ghost, be ascribed
all Power, Praise, and Thanksgiving, now
and for evermore. *Amen.*

F I N I S.
